

Be a force for change:

Talk with  
Young People  
About HIV



Information and Guidance  
to Get You Started



## Be a Force for Change:

### Talking with Young People About HIV

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## Introduction

Educating your children about health behaviors can often be a daunting job. Yet research shows that adolescent children look to their parents, particularly their mothers, as their most useful and helpful source of information on sexuality issues, including HIV and AIDS. Family education is a key component of learning to make safer choices because it targets a new generation of young people who need to learn the basic facts about this disease. *Be a Force for Change: Talk with Young People About HIV* will help prepare you for the task of informing young people about HIV/AIDS.



This guide equips parents with:

- a primer on the science of HIV/AIDS
- facts about HIV transmission
- common questions that might be raised by children and accurate answers to dispel any myths
- tips on starting and continuing a conversation on HIV and sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention
- reproducible pages with information on HIV/AIDS for your child or teenager
- resources for more information (provided throughout the booklet)

As a parent or a person with young people in your life, only you can determine what to tell your child. This guide will help you disseminate accurate information to your family.

## A Parent's Primer on the Science of HIV/AIDS

- HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).
- HIV infection causes the body's immune system to break down so the body can't fight off illnesses.
- The many conditions that define AIDS represent a later stage of HIV infection.

### How the Immune System Works

The immune system is a network of cells and organs that work together to defend the body against infection by germs, such as HIV. Lymphocytes and macrophages (types of white blood cells) play key roles in the functioning of the immune system. When a person becomes infected with HIV, the virus attaches to specific parts of the surfaces of these white blood cells. These specific parts (or mol-

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ecules) are called CD4 cells. When HIV enters one of these cells, the virus inserts its own genes into the cell's reproductive system and uses it to produce more HIV. This infection kills the CD4 cell and spreads HIV to other CD4 cells, where the process is repeated.

***HIV can be present in the body for up to 12 or more years without producing any outward sign of illness.***

If HIV enters the body, the immune system will begin to make antibodies to the virus. Normally, antibodies help protect the body from infection. However, the antibodies that develop against HIV are not sufficient to clear the infection, and the virus persists and continues to reproduce in infected persons. Antibodies can be detected by a test using blood, fluids from inside the mouth, or urine. A person is considered HIV-infected if he or she has two or more "reactive" HIV antibody tests, the findings of which are then confirmed by another more specific antibody test. The period between infection and the development of detectable antibodies is the seroconversion period (also referred to as the window period). People with HIV can infect others during this time even though antibodies cannot yet be detected.

HIV can be present in the body for up to 12 or more years without producing any outward sign of illness. Infection with HIV appears to be lifelong in all who become infected. People infected with HIV eventually develop symptoms that also may be caused by other, less serious conditions. With HIV infection, these symptoms usually last a long time and may be more severe. They include enlarged lymph glands, tiredness, fever, loss of appetite and weight, diarrhea, yeast infections of the mouth and vagina, and night sweats.

When the immune system becomes weaker, the infected person becomes more susceptible to illnesses that normally do not affect healthy people. These illnesses are called opportunistic because they take advantage of damage to the immune system. A person is considered to have AIDS when one or more opportunistic infections occur.



The most common opportunistic infections are PCP (*Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia — a rare type of pneumonia), yeast infections of the esophagus (the tube that carries food to the stomach), tuberculosis, Kaposi's sarcoma (a cancer of certain blood vessels), and CMV (cytomegalovirus — an infection of the eye that can cause blindness). Also, if an infected person's CD4 cell count drops below 200, he or she is considered to have AIDS. A healthy person usually has a range of 800 to 1,200 CD4 cells.

Even if someone with HIV has no signs of illness or infection, he or she can still infect others. HIV is spread mainly by sexual contact with an infected person, by sharing needles and/or syringes (mostly through drug injection) with someone who is infected, or, less commonly (and now very rarely in countries where blood is tested for HIV antibodies), through transfusions of infected blood or blood-clotting factors. Babies born to HIV-infected women may become infected before or during birth or through breastfeeding after birth.

Today, new medications used in combination have been proven effective in delaying the onset of illness and are helping people with HIV live longer.

## How People Can and Cannot Become Infected With HIV

### *How Can People Become Infected With HIV?*

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- by having unprotected (without a condom) sex (anal, vaginal, or oral) with someone with HIV
- by sharing needles and/or syringes with someone with HIV
- from a mother with HIV to her baby before or during birth or through breastfeeding
- from an infusion of blood or blood-clotting factors (rare since 1985)

### *How Do People Get HIV From Sexual Intercourse?*

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HIV can be spread through unprotected sexual intercourse from male to female, female to male, male to male, or female to female. Unprotected sexual intercourse means sexual intercourse without correct and consistent use of a latex condom or any other physical barrier to HIV (such as the female condom).

HIV may be in an infected person's blood, semen, or vaginal secretions. It can enter the body through certain types of tissues, especially the tissues that line the inside of the vagina, anus, and penis. It also can enter through cuts or rips (some of which may already be present, and some of which may occur during intercourse) in the vagina, penis, rectum, or mouth. Sexual transmission occurs through sexual intercourse (anal, vaginal, or oral) with a person who is infected with HIV.

*HIV can be spread through unprotected sexual intercourse from male to female, female to male, male to male, or female to female.*

If someone has an STD, such as syphilis or gonorrhea, he or she is at risk of becoming infected with HIV. There are two reasons for this. One is that the person is involved in the same behaviors that spread HIV. The other reason is that some STDs cause sores on the body — usually on the already vulnerable soft tissues of the penis, vagina, and rectum. The presence of these sores can make it easier for the virus to enter the body. For girls, the presence of one STD changes the chemistry of the receptor cells on the walls of the vagina, making them more receptive to other STDs, including HIV.

In addition, if someone is infected with HIV and has another STD as well, he or she is at increased risk of transmitting HIV through sex.

Since many infected people have no symptoms, it's hard to be sure who is or is not infected with HIV. The more sex partners someone has without using condoms, the greater his or her chances are of encountering one who is infected, and of becoming infected. Anybody can have HIV — anyone of either sex and of any race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. And no matter how healthy or attractive a person is, he or she could still be infected with HIV.

### ***How Do People Get HIV From Using Needles?***

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If you inject drugs, sharing needles, syringes, or “works” even once with another person is an easy way to be infected with HIV. Blood from an infected person can remain in or on a needle or syringe and then be transferred directly into the body of the next person who uses it. HIV can be spread by sharing any kind of needle, not just those used to inject illegal drugs. These include needles used to inject steroids or vitamins and those used for tattooing or ear or body piercing. However, if you get a tattoo or pierced ears from a professional who uses a sterile needle for each customer, there is no risk of infection with HIV. People should not be shy about asking questions. Reputable technicians will explain the safety measures they follow.

### ***HIV and Babies***

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A woman infected with HIV can pass the virus on to her baby during pregnancy or during birth. She can also pass it on when breastfeeding. If a woman is infected before or during pregnancy, her child has about one chance in four of being born infected. Following a specific drug regimen that includes AZT during pregnancy can reduce this risk to about 1 in 12. Any woman who is considering having a baby and who thinks she might have placed herself at risk for HIV infection - even if this occurred years ago - should seek counseling and testing before she gets pregnant or early in pregnancy.

To find out where in your area you can go for counseling and testing, call your local health department or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National AIDS Hotline, 1-800-342-AIDS (2437) (English) or 1-800-344-SIDA (7432) (Spanish). For more information about counseling and testing, see the part of this guide titled “Common Questions, Accurate Answers.”



## ***Blood Transfusions and HIV***

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Although in the past some people became infected with HIV from receiving blood transfusions, this risk is extremely low today. Since 1985, all donated blood has been tested for evidence of HIV. All blood found to contain evidence of HIV is discarded.

Giving blood at a blood bank or at other established blood collection centers is not a risk for HIV infection. The needles used for blood donations are sterile. They are used once, then destroyed.

***HIV is not spread through everyday contact with infected people at school, at work, at home, or anywhere else.***

## ***What Are Other Ways People Can Get HIV?***

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### ***Healthcare Setting***

Healthcare workers have been infected with HIV after being stuck with needles and, less frequently, after infected blood or concentrated virus from a laboratory came in contact with the workers' open cuts or splashed into a mucous membrane (e.g., the eyes or the inside of the nose). On the other hand, there has been only one instance where patients were infected by a single healthcare worker. Investigations have been completed involving thousands of patients of many other HIV-infected healthcare workers. No other cases of this type of transmission have been found.

### ***Kissing***

Because of the potential for contact with blood during "French" or open-mouth kissing, experts recommend against engaging in this activity with a person known to be infected with HIV. However, the risk of acquiring HIV during open-mouth kissing is believed to be very low. CDC has investigated one case of HIV infection that may be attributed to contact with blood during open-mouth kissing.

### ***Biting***

A State health department conducted an investigation of an incident that suggested blood-to-blood transmission of HIV by a human bite. There have been other reports in the medical literature in which HIV appears to have been transmitted by a bite. Severe trauma with extensive tissue tearing and damage and the presence of blood were reported in each of these instances. Biting is not a common way of transmitting HIV. In fact, there are numerous reports of bites that did *not* result in HIV infection.

## ***What Are Ways People Cannot Get HIV?***

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HIV infection doesn't just happen. People don't simply "catch" it like a cold or flu. Unlike cold or flu viruses, HIV is not spread by coughs or sneezes, sweat, or tears.

HIV is not spread through everyday contact with infected people at school, at work, at home, or anywhere else.

HIV is not spread through clothes, phones, or toilet seats. It can't be passed on by things like spoons, cups, or other objects that someone who is infected with the virus has used.

HIV is not spread by mosquito bites. HIV does not live in a mosquito, and it is not transmitted through a mosquito's salivary glands like other diseases such as malaria or yellow fever. HIV is not spread by bedbugs, lice, flies, or other insects.

HIV is not spread by casual contact through closed-mouth or "social" kissing.

## Common Questions, Accurate Answers

An important part of being ready to talk to young people about preventing HIV infection and AIDS is being able to answer any questions they may ask.

If someone asks you a question about HIV infection or AIDS and you do not know the answer, it's okay to say you don't know. Don't make up an answer — you may be providing inaccurate information that can cause a lot of harm. Take steps to obtain the correct information and tell them later.



Treat a tough question as a chance to show a young person how to get information about HIV infection and AIDS themselves. You, or anyone else, can get accurate answers to difficult questions by calling your local AIDS Hotline or the CDC National AIDS Hotline at 1-800-342-AIDS (2437). You do not have to give your name, and the call is free.

To help you answer questions that might be raised by your child, here are some commonly asked questions with scientifically correct answers:

*"If somebody in my class at school has AIDS, am I likely to get it too?"*

No. HIV is spread by unprotected sex, needle sharing, or infected blood. It can also be given by an infected mother to her baby during pregnancy, birth, or breastfeeding. People infected with HIV cannot pass the virus to others through ordinary school activities such as:

- showering together in the gym locker room
- playing sports
- sharing water bottles
- sharing utensils

***You do not have to be homosexual to become infected with HIV.***

You will not become infected with HIV just by attending school with someone who is infected with HIV or who has AIDS.

*"Can I become infected with HIV from 'French' kissing?"*

There is the potential, especially when either partner has advanced gum disease or other conditions where blood is present, for contact with blood during "French" or open-mouth kissing. For this reason, experts recommend against engaging in this

activity with a person known to be infected with HIV. However, the risk of acquiring HIV during open-mouth kissing is believed to be very low. There is only one documented case of HIV infection that may be attributed to contact with blood during open-mouth kissing.

*“ Can I get HIV from a toilet seat or other things I use a lot?*

No, HIV does not live on toilet seats or other everyday objects. You do not have to worry about doorknobs, phones, money, or drinking fountains.

*“ Can I get HIV from a mosquito or other insect?*

No. You won't get HIV from mosquito bites. The AIDS virus does not live in a mosquito, and it is not transmitted through a mosquito's salivary glands like other diseases such as malaria or yellow fever. You won't get it from bedbugs, lice, flies, or other insects, either.

*“ If I have never injected drugs, could I have become infected with HIV?*

If you have never injected drugs and have never had unprotected sexual intercourse of any kind (and if you did not have a mother who was HIV-positive when she was pregnant with you), you are not at risk for HIV infection.

*“ If I have had sexual intercourse only with a person of the opposite sex, could I have become infected with HIV?*

Yes. You do not have to be homosexual to become infected with HIV. Both males and females can become infected and transmit the virus to a male or female through sex. If a previous sex partner, of either sex, was infected, you may be infected as well.

*“Can I become infected with HIV from oral sex?*

It is possible, though not as likely as infection through anal or vaginal sex.



- Oral sex often involves semen, vaginal secretions, or blood — fluids that contain HIV.
- HIV can be transmitted when someone gets semen, vaginal secretions, or blood from an infected person into his or her body.
- During oral sex, the virus could enter the body through tiny cuts or tears in the mouth.
- Condoms or other protective barriers should be used to prevent contact with body fluids.

*“A friend of mine told me that as long as I am taking birth control pills, I will never get HIV infection. Is this true?*

No. Birth control pills do not protect against HIV. You can become infected with HIV while you are taking birth control pills. The only sure way not to become infected is to:

- not have sex
- not share needles

Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can prevent HIV infection and other STDs. Use them the right way every time you have sex. (See instructions on condom use beginning on page 11 of this brochure.)

Even if you are taking the pill, you should use a latex condom unless you and your partner are sure that neither is infected with HIV.

You can't be sure that you don't have HIV unless you are tested for the presence of HIV antibodies. In most people who are infected with HIV, it takes one to two months after being exposed to develop enough antibodies to be detected by the test. In some people, it could take up to six months. Until you are sure you and your partner are not infected with HIV, you should continue to use condoms if you have sex.

***There is absolutely no risk of HIV infection from donating blood in the United States.***

*"My friend has anal sex with her boyfriend so she won't get pregnant. She won't get AIDS from doing that, right?"*

Wrong. Anal intercourse with an infected partner is one of the most common ways HIV is spread. Whether you are male or female, anal sex is very risky.

*"Is it possible to become infected with HIV by donating blood?"*

No. There is absolutely no risk of HIV infection from donating blood in the United States. All blood donation centers use a new, sterile needle for each donation.

*"I had a blood transfusion after 1985. Is it likely that I am infected with HIV?"*

No, it is unlikely. All blood donations have been tested for antibodies to HIV since 1985. The American Red Cross and other established blood collection centers use an extensive two-part screening process of all prospective blood donors. The donor is asked about his or her behaviors that could have led to HIV infection.

If the person's answers reveal that he or she may have a chance of having HIV, he or she is not permitted to donate blood. If the answers reveal no risk for HIV infection, the person is able to donate blood.

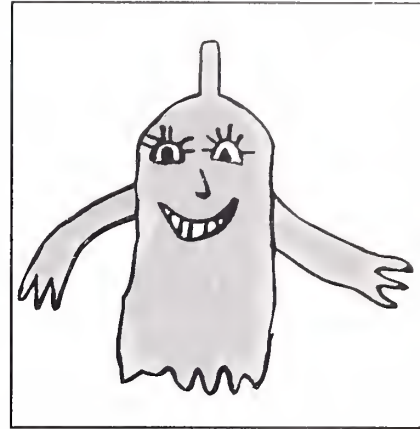
Once the blood is donated, it is tested for the presence of antibodies to HIV, and for other infections and diseases. All blood donations that test positive for HIV are discarded. Today, the American blood supply is extremely safe.

If you are still concerned about the very small possibility of having HIV infection from an earlier transfusion, you should see your doctor or seek counseling about getting an HIV antibody test. Call the CDC National AIDS Hotline, 1-800-342-AIDS (2437), or your local health department to find out about counseling and testing sites in your area.



*"I think I might have gotten infected two months ago when I had sex without a condom with someone I didn't know. Should I get an HIV test?"*

Yes. You should talk to a counselor (doctor or professional healthcare worker at a testing site) about the need for HIV testing. Or you can call the CDC National AIDS Hotline, 1-800-342-AIDS (2437), to find out where you can go in your area to get counseling about an HIV test.



***Call the CDC National AIDS Hotline, 1-800-342-AIDS (2437), to find out where you can go in your area to get counseling about an HIV test.***

Remember, due to the period between exposure and the development of enough antibodies to be detectable on the antibody test (the seroconversion or window period), you could be infected with HIV and not show it on a test. You can infect others during this time.

*"As long as I use a latex condom during sex, I won't get HIV infection, right?"*

If you choose to have sex, a latex condom can provide very good protection from HIV. Latex condoms have been shown to prevent HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases. But you have to use them consistently and correctly each time you have sex — vaginal, anal, or oral.

*"What is the proper way to use a condom?"*

You can greatly lower your chances of infection with HIV or any other STD if you follow these simple instructions:

Use a latex condom consistently and correctly every time you have sex — anal, vaginal, or oral. Latex serves as a physical barrier to the virus. "Lambskin" or "natural membrane" condoms are not as good because of the pores in the material. Look for "latex" or "for disease prevention" on the package. If you have allergies to latex, there is a new polyurethane (a type of plastic) condom available to help prevent HIV infection. Lab testing has shown that particles as small as sperm and HIV cannot pass through polyurethane. Polyurethane condoms are made of the same material as the female condom. The female condom is another alternative to male latex condoms and should be used as directed on the package.

As soon as the penis becomes erect (hard), put the latex condom on it. If the penis is uncircumcised, pull the foreskin back before putting on the condom. Make sure you read the directions on the package.

Leave a small space in the top of the latex condom to catch the semen, or use a latex condom with a reservoir tip. Remove any air that remains in the tip by gently pressing the tip toward the base of the penis.

When you use a lubricant, check the label to make sure it has a water base. Do not use petroleum-based jelly, cold cream, baby oil, or other lubricants such as cooking oil or shortening. These weaken the latex condom and can cause it to break.

*Talking with young people about sex-related topics including HIV infection and AIDS should not be limited to a one-time*

- If you put the condom on inside out, remove it, throw it away, and start over with a new one. Even if you did not start having sex with the inside-out condom, do not flip it right-side out and use it.
- If you feel the condom break while you are having sex, stop immediately and pull out. Do not continue until you have taken the broken condom off and put on a new condom.
- After climax (ejaculation), withdraw while the penis is still erect, holding onto the rim of the condom while pulling out so that it doesn't come off.
- Tie and wrap the condom (in paper if available), then throw in wastebasket and wash your hands.
- Never use a condom more than once.
- Don't use a condom that is brittle or has been stored near heat or in your wallet or glove compartment for a long time. Check the package for date of expiration.
- Practice using a condom prior to being with a partner. Knowing how to use a condom before intercourse will make the whole process safer for you and your partner.
- Talk about using condoms before you need to. Scientific research shows that partners who communicate about condoms before engaging in sex are more likely to practice safe sex.

#### *"What do I do if I think I am infected with HIV?"*

Remember, you must have done things that put you at risk for HIV infection. Those behaviors include:

- sharing needles with an infected person
- having unprotected sex with an infected person

The only way to know if you have HIV is to be tested.

Call the CDC National AIDS Hotline, 1-800-342-AIDS (2437), to find out where you can go in your area to get counseling about an HIV test. Your doctor may advise you to be counseled and tested if you have hemophilia or received a blood transfusion between 1978 and 1985. If you are worried, talk to someone about getting an HIV test that will show if you are infected. That person might be a parent, doctor, or other healthcare provider, or someone who works at an AIDS counseling and testing center.

You don't have to give your name, and the call is free. You also can call your state or local health department. The number is under "Health Department" in the government section of your telephone book.

## **Talking With Young People About Sex, Drugs, and HIV Infection/AIDS**

Young people today often face tough decisions about sex and drugs. Most likely, you will not be with the young people you care about when they face these choices. But if you talk to them now about sexuality, making decisions, and HIV/AIDS prevention, you can help them resist peer pressure and make informed choices that will help protect their health, now and for the rest of their lives.

Parents, particularly female parents, play a crucial role in helping young people make smart choices when it comes to sexual risk. CDC research has shown a link between mothers who discuss a broad range of sex-related topics with their children and less sexual risk behavior among adolescents. In addition, timing is critical: research has shown that adolescents who communicate with their mothers before their first sexual encounters are three times more likely to use a condom than those who did not talk with their mothers.

### ***Tips for Starting — and Continuing — a Communication Process***

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#### ***Envision it as an Ongoing Conversation***

Talking with young people about sex-related topics including HIV infection and AIDS should not be limited to a one-time conversation. Rather, it should involve ongoing, lifelong communication of information that helps shape attitudes, beliefs, and values.

Talking about sex-related topics like HIV infection and AIDS can be difficult. You may feel uncomfortable just thinking about it. That's understandable. If you are nervous or embarrassed, don't be afraid to say so. Bringing your feelings into the open can help break the tension. Besides, a young person will sense your uneasiness even if you don't mention it. Here are some things to consider that should help you start and maintain this ongoing conversation.



#### ***Review the Facts***

You don't have to be an expert to talk with a young person about sex-related topics including HIV infection and AIDS. But you should understand the basic facts — especially regarding safer sex — so that you will deliver the right information. This brochure will help you understand the key facts. If you do not know the answer to a particular question, you can use the resources at the end of this brochure to help find it.

***Try to identify with your young person, but try not to parallel your childhood experiences.***

#### ***Build Your Skills***

Many adults, even those who equip themselves with the facts about sexuality (including HIV and AIDS), experience difficulty in initiating such discussions with young people. In addition to the facts, it is useful to practice the skills associated with starting and continuing such discussions. If you feel overwhelmed by the challenge of having these types of discussions, look for programs in your area that provide adults an opportunity to develop the skills and strategies needed. Such programs may be offered by a variety of organizations, including YMCAs/YWCAs, churches and synagogues, work sites, Parent-Teacher Associations (P.T.A.s), and community-based organizations. In addition, or alternatively, it may be useful just to talk about the facts with another adult first so you feel more comfortable about talking with young people. You may want to choose an adult with values similar to yours.



Beyond gaining the confidence to initiate and continue discussions about sex and HIV risks, there are other skills you will need to practice. These include listening, trusting, and facilitating a mutual conversation. This section contains more information about such skills.

### *Get The Conversation Started*

Be aware that just because a young person doesn't ask about sex or related topics, it doesn't mean he or she isn't thinking about it. Many young people believe that if they ask about sex adults will think they are having sex, and therefore these young people avoid the subject. This means you may have to be the one to bring up the topic.

An effective way to start any conversation is to be informed first and then be a good listener and communicator. You can start talking about HIV infection and AIDS at any time and in any way you choose. If you find it awkward to raise the topic, you can look for cues that will help you. Here are some examples:

### *Decide What Young People Need to Know*

As an adult who knows the young people you will talk with, you are in the best position to decide what they need to know about HIV infection and AIDS.

***Even though young people may not ask for it, they often want guidance from adults.***

Think carefully about their knowledge and experience. How old are the young people? How much do they already know about HIV infection, AIDS, and other related subjects, such as sex and drug use? Where have they gotten their information? From friends? School? Television? You? Is it likely to be accurate?

Also ask yourself these questions: Is it possible that the young people you will be talking with are sexually active? Have they tried drugs? Do they spend time with people who do these things?

In addition, consider your family's religious and cultural values. Do you want to convey these in the conversation? How will you get them across?

These are important questions. Answering them will help you stress the information that the young people in your life most need to know.

### *Respond if Young People Ask*

Don't be surprised if a young person asks you directly about HIV infection and AIDS. You also can use young people's questions about related topics, such as dating, to lead into a conversation about sex or HIV infection and AIDS. Many adolescents say they know all they need to know. Be ready to explore these issues with them.

### *Step Into a Young Person's Shoes*

How did you think when you were an adolescent? Try to identify with your young person, but try not to parallel your childhood experiences. Think of the important differences between the world a child grows up in today and the one you grew up in;



this can help you make your discussion timely and relevant. The better you understand a young person's point of view, the better you'll be able to communicate.

### *Have a Mutual Conversation*

A conversation is an exchange of ideas and information, not a lecture. Encourage the young person you are speaking with to talk and ask questions. Ask about his or her thoughts, feelings, and activities. Show that you want to learn from a young person just as you hope he or she will learn from you.

### *Listen*

Listen to young people as closely as you hope they will listen to you. Stop talking if they want to speak. Give them your full attention and make eye contact. Ask questions. Give the young person the opportunity to lead the discussion.

### *Be Upbeat*

Try to show a positive attitude. A critical, disapproving tone can prompt a young person to ignore you.

### *Don't Get Discouraged*

Young people often challenge what they hear from adults. If a young person questions what you say, try not to get into an argument. Encourage the young person to check your information with another source, such as the CDC National AIDS Hotline, 1-800-342-AIDS (2437). You also can show them some of the information in this guide. If your conversation is cut short for any reason, don't give up. It is important to keep talking. If the young person does not want to talk, ask him or her to select alternatives — such as reading a booklet — that will provide education without the pressure of a formal discussion.

### *Help Young People Recognize That They **Do** Make Decisions*

Young people often feel they have no control over their lives. Adults often tell them when to go to school, when to be home, when to go to bed, and when to wake up. It's important to help them see that they make decisions about their lives every day, such as what music they listen to and whom they spend time with. Point out that they also make — or will make — tough decisions with serious consequences about sex and drugs.

### *Recognize That Young People Can Make Smart Decisions With Your Help*

Even though young people may not ask for it, they often want guidance from adults. You can offer guidance to the young people you care about by helping them develop the skills to make smart decisions — decisions about their education, their social life, their health. Just as important, you can help young people to understand that they have the ability — and the responsibility — to make smart and healthy decisions.

***Correcting  
myths and  
prejudices  
early will  
help children  
protect  
themselves  
and others  
from HIV  
infection and  
AIDS in the  
future.***

### *Emphasize Cause and Effect*

Many young people do not fully understand the direct relationship between their decisions and the consequences that may result. You can help them see that thoughtful decisions can bring them direct benefits and save them from harsh consequences, such as HIV infection and AIDS.

### *Consider Other Influences*

#### *– School*

Ask a young person what he or she is learning in health, science, or any other class about HIV infection and AIDS. Use the answer to launch your conversation.

#### *– Community*

Local events, such as AIDS benefits or health fairs, can serve as handy conversation starters. You might even propose going to such an event with a young person as an educational experience.

#### *– Peer Pressures*

Young people's decisions are often strongly influenced by pressure to conform with friends and acquaintances. Peer pressure also can cause young people to act on impulses rather than to think through their decisions.

Research shows that adolescents who do not discuss sex or condoms with their mothers act in accordance with their peers' values and attitudes to a greater extent than adolescents who do talk with their mothers. If their peers are not encouraging responsible behavior, this can lead to big problems.

By talking with young people, you can help them consider the effects of peer pressure. Point out that it is okay to act according to their own best judgment, not according to what friends encourage them to do. Suggest that they involve their friends in role-playing. Suggest that their friends may be testing limits and looking for support in making sound choices. Talk about the difficulties you may have had defying peer pressure. Then talk about the reasons you are glad you did, or the reasons you wish you had.

## **Start the Conversation before Children are Confronted with Sex or Drug Risks**

### *(Elementary School)*

Since most children in this age group are not sexually active or have not tried drugs, you may decide that the young people you speak with do not need to know the details of how HIV is transmitted through unprotected sexual intercourse and injection drug use. Indeed, some believe that this age is too young to talk about sex at all. However, research shows that timing is critical. Adults who actively listen and ask questions will know when the timing is right to begin to talk about sex-related topics – including abstaining from sex, safer sex, and HIV infection/AIDS.

Regardless of how much they know about sex, children in elementary school probably have heard about AIDS and may be scared by it. Much of what they have heard

may have been incorrect. To reassure them, make sure they know that they cannot become infected through everyday contact, such as going to school with someone who is infected with HIV.

Children also may have heard myths and prejudicial comments about HIV infection and AIDS. Correct any ideas that people can be infected by touching a doorknob or being bitten by a mosquito. Urge children to treat people who are infected with HIV or who have AIDS with compassion and understanding, not cruelty and anger.

Teach children that AIDS is a disease that has affected people of both sexes and all races, ethnicities, and sexual orientations. Correcting myths and prejudices early will help children protect themselves and others from HIV infection and AIDS in the future.

Consider including the following points in a conversation about HIV infection and AIDS with children in the late elementary and middle school levels:

- AIDS is a disease caused by a tiny germ called a virus.
- Many people have AIDS today — male and female; rich and poor; white, black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American; old and young; heterosexual and homosexual.
- As of December 1997, more than 111,000 people aged 20 to 29 had been reported with AIDS. Because a person can be infected with HIV for up to 12 or more years before the signs of AIDS appear, many of these young people with AIDS were infected with HIV when they were teenagers.
- There are many myths about AIDS. (Correct some of them if you can.)
- You can become infected with HIV either by having unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected person or by sharing needles or syringes with an infected person. Also, women infected with HIV can pass the virus to their babies during pregnancy, birth, or breastfeeding. There are therapies available to reduce the risk from infected mother to baby.
- A person who is infected can infect others in the ways described above, even if no symptoms are present. You cannot tell by looking at someone whether he or she is infected with HIV. An infected person can appear completely healthy.
- People who have AIDS should be treated with compassion.

*Teens need to learn that using alcohol and drugs can cause them to make decisions that can put them at risk.*

## Deciding What to Say to Teenagers

*(Middle School and High School)*

There is no doubt that it is best to begin an ongoing conversation about sexuality well in advance of a young person's first sexual encounter. Teens need to know a lot more about HIV infection and AIDS than do younger children. Teens are more likely to face choices about drug and alcohol use and sex. Because HIV is spread through unprotected sexual intercourse or sharing needles and syringes, teens need to learn how to make decisions that keep themselves and others from being infected with HIV. Because alcohol and drugs can affect decisions, teens need to learn that using these substances can cause them to make decisions that can put them at risk.

Like younger children, teens also must learn to distinguish myths from facts about HIV infection and AIDS. They need to learn about the issues that the disease poses for society, such as the importance of opposing prejudice and discrimination. Discussing all of these things will help equip teens to make decisions that can prevent the spread of HIV infection and AIDS.

In a conversation with a teen, consider including the following points about making decisions, HIV infection, and AIDS (you may use them as talking points or come up with your own):

- Give a definition of AIDS. (See page 3.)
- Give a definition of HIV infection. (See page 3.)
- Point out that as of December 1997, more than 641,000 Americans had been reported as having AIDS and over 111,000 of them were between the ages of 20 and 29. Many of these people were infected when they were teenagers.



- Explain how HIV is transmitted from one person to another.
- Explain that a young woman's body is particularly susceptible to acquiring and transmitting HIV if she already has another STD.
- Explain how to reduce the risk for HIV infection from sex.
- Explain how HIV is transmitted through drug use.
- Talk about the importance of understanding and compassion toward people with AIDS.
- Talk about the importance of eliminating prejudice and discrimination related to AIDS.

### ***Becoming Infected Through Sexual Intercourse***

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Many teenagers are sexually active. Having unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected partner is one way to become infected with HIV. Avoiding sexual intercourse is one sure way to avoid infection with the virus. In deciding what you want to say to a young person about sex, you may want to consider these ideas:

#### ***Delay Sexual Intercourse***

You may want to bear in mind that the idea of delaying sexual activity conflicts with the many sexual messages young people see and hear every day on television, in movies, at school, and from friends. Many young people conclude that "everyone is doing it."

By discussing the benefits of delaying sex, you can help a young person make a wise and informed decision about when to become sexually active. You may wish to emphasize the following benefits of delaying sexual intercourse:

- It gives a person time to be sure he or she is physically and emotionally ready to adopt healthy, responsible attitudes about engaging in a sexual relationship.
- It helps prevent unintended pregnancy.
- It helps prevent STDs, including HIV.



***If you talk with a young person about drug use and HIV infection, talk about peer pressure and self-esteem issues.***

### *How to Avoid Risky Situations*

Even young people who truly intend to delay sexual intercourse can have trouble refusing strong persuasion. You can help them succeed by talking with them about how to anticipate and avoid situations where they might be pressured to have sex and how to develop skills to say no. Encourage them to anticipate and think through such situations, and practice good planning, decision making, and communications skills.

Explain to them that no one has the right to force them to have sex, and then tell them some effective ways to refuse. You may want to consider the suggestions in the following section.

### *How to Say No to Risky Activities*

Young people will be more likely to refuse activities that place them at risk for HIV infection if you suggest some effective ways to say no. For instance, when you talk about sex and HIV infection, discuss ways to say no to sex. You might use some of the following suggestions as talking points, or come up with your own.

- “I feel good about not having sex until I’m married. I’ve made my decision and I feel comfortable with it.”
- “I am just not ready for it yet.”
- “I know it feels right for you and I care about you. But I’m not going to do it until I’m sure it’s the right thing for me to do.”
- “I care about you but I don’t want the responsibility that comes with sex.”
- “I think sex outside of a long-term, committed relationship is wrong.”

Ask the young people you talk with to think of some of their own ways to say no and to practice them with you and their friends.

### *What Can They Do Instead?*

Telling young people only what they shouldn’t do can make a parent sound very negative. It will be helpful to discuss some risk-free alternatives. Young people will be better able to choose safe behavior if you tell them ways to express their romantic feelings without risk of HIV infection. You can make a list of these activities and review it during your conversation. Ask the young people you talk with to suggest some of their own ideas.

If you think a young person you know has a drug problem, get professional help now. Contact your doctor, local health department, or social service agency to find out who can help you in your community. Call the 24-hour Hotline of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1-800-662-HELP (4357) to find out where you can get help in your area.

### *If You Think a Teen Is Sexually Active*

Short of abstaining from sex, the best way to protect oneself from STDs such as HIV infection is to use a latex condom consistently and correctly every time one has sex. It is crucial that people understand that the more sex partners they have,

the greater their risk of getting an STD. Besides HIV, there are 44 STDs they could catch.

You can also help young people by stressing that they should avoid making decisions about sex while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. These substances impair judgment and lower inhibitions, and people with clouded judgment are more likely to take sexual risks that will increase their chance of HIV infection. You may wish to discuss the importance of using a latex condom. Such discussions may help young people make wise decisions that will reduce the risk for HIV infection during sexual intercourse. Latex condoms provide a barrier and, if used correctly and consistently, greatly reduce the risk of infection with many STDs, including HIV. People who decide to be sexually active outside a mutually faithful, long-term relationship with an uninfected partner should understand the importance of using a latex condom consistently and correctly when they have sex.

For more detailed information about how to use a latex condom, read the part of this guide called “Common Questions, Accurate Answers.” (See page 7).

### *Preventing HIV Transmission Caused by Needle Sharing*

HIV often spreads among people who share needles, syringes, and drug preparation “works” with other people. If you know young people who use needles for a medical reason (such as people with hemophilia or diabetes), make sure they use and dispose of their needles properly. Needles should be used only under a doctor’s order and should never be shared.

In your role of counselor or guide, it is vital that you urge young people not to use drugs. Many drug users face a short, bleak future — jail, hospitalization, or an early grave — and drug use increases their risk of HIV infection.

If you talk with a young person about drug use and HIV infection, talk about peer pressure and self-esteem issues. You might suggest some of the following ways to resist peer pressure, or use examples of your own:

- “I just don’t want to take drugs.”
- “I don’t want to lose my job. Drugs and work don’t mix.”
- “I want to be a good athlete.  
Drugs will harm my body.”
- “I want to go to college. I can’t risk getting hooked on drugs.”
- “I want to join the Army. Drugs could blow my chances.”
- “Drugs are illegal. I won’t break the law.”
- “When I take drugs, I don’t feel in control. I don’t like that feeling.”
- “I love my life too much to do drugs.”
- “I don’t want to waste my time. It’s not my idea of fun.”



## Information For Children

You may have heard about a disease called AIDS. A lot of people have been talking about it lately. Many people have gotten AIDS in the past few years. A lot of them have died.



AIDS is a condition that weakens the body's power to fight off sickness. It's a very serious medical problem. That's why people are talking about it. But sometimes people talk without knowing the facts.

AIDS is caused by a tiny germ. Doctors call a germ like this a virus. The virus that causes AIDS is called the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

The key thing for you to understand about AIDS is that it is not easy to get through the things you do every day. You cannot "catch" AIDS as you can a cold or the

chickenpox. You cannot get AIDS from doing things like going to school, using a bathroom, or riding in a school bus.

It is important to know the facts about AIDS. You can be a leader by knowing the truth.

All of the following statements about AIDS are true. Read them. Remember them. When you hear something about AIDS that isn't true, speak up. Say that you know the facts. Tell people the truth.

- You cannot get AIDS from the things you do every day, such as going to school, using a toilet, or drinking from a glass.
- You cannot get AIDS from sitting next to someone in school who has AIDS.
- You cannot get AIDS from a kiss on the cheek, or from touching or hugging someone who is infected.
- You cannot get AIDS from a mosquito or any other kind of insect. The virus that causes AIDS dies inside of bugs, so there is no way they can give it to you.
- You can become infected with HIV either by having sex with an infected person without using a latex condom consistently and correctly or by sharing drug needles or syringes with an infected person. Also, women infected with HIV can spread the virus to their babies during pregnancy, during birth, or through breastfeeding. There are medicines available to reduce the chances of HIV transmission from an infected mother to her baby.
- A person who is infected can infect others during sex, even if the infected person is not sick. You cannot tell by looking at someone whether he or she is infected with HIV. An infected person can look and feel completely healthy.
- You can play with someone who has HIV or AIDS just as you can with any of your other friends. This will not make you sick. As with anyone, always be careful when you get playground cuts and scrapes or play sports. Also, you



should not become “blood brothers” or “blood sisters.” This is when two people each cut or stick their fingers and mix their blood together. There are many diseases you can catch if you mix another person’s blood with yours, so you should never, ever do it.

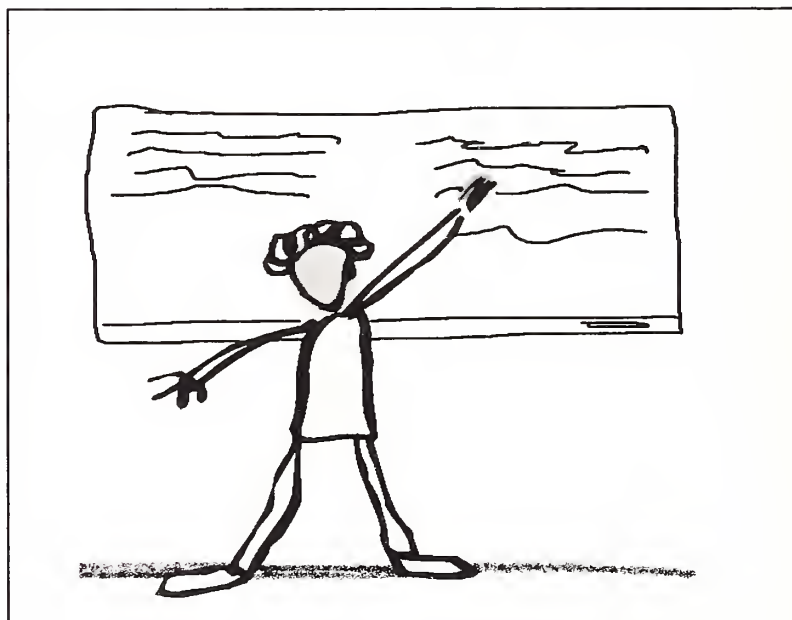
- Many people have AIDS — male and female; rich and poor; white, black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American; young and old; heterosexual and homosexual. Anyone can get AIDS.
- As of December 1997, more than 111,000 people aged 20 to 29 had been found to have AIDS. Because a person can be infected with the virus that causes AIDS for up to 12 or more years before the signs of AIDS appear, scientists believe that many of these young people were infected when they were teenagers.
- Treat a person with AIDS just as you would treat anyone else. If he or she is sick, then treat him or her the way you would want to be treated when you don’t feel well.

### ***See How Much You Know About HIV Infection And AIDS***

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1. What is the name of the disease that weakens the body’s power to fight off illness?
2. What is the name of the virus that causes AIDS?
3. Check all of the things that cannot infect you with HIV:
  - ☐ a toilet
  - ☐ a kiss on the cheek
  - ☐ a drinking glass
  - ☐ a mosquito
  - ☐ going to school with someone who is infected with HIV
  - ☐ helping someone who is infected with HIV or who has AIDS

**Answers to Quiz**  
1. AIDS 2. HIV 3. All of the items should be checked. They cannot infect you with HIV.





## Information For Teenagers

As of December 1997, over 111,000 people between the ages of 20 and 29 had been reported with AIDS. Many of them probably were infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, when they were teenagers.

There are things that put you at risk for getting infected with HIV. For instance, the virus that causes AIDS can be passed from one person to another through unprotected sexual intercourse (sex without using a latex condom consistently and correctly). The same sexual activities that cause pregnancy and spread STDs can infect you with HIV.

There are other ways besides sex that teens can get HIV. To find out how to protect yourself and your friends, read on.

### ***What Is AIDS?***

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AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. AIDS is a condition in which the body's immune system — the system that fights off sickness — breaks down. Because the immune system fails, a person with AIDS can develop a variety of life-threatening illnesses.

### ***What Is HIV Infection?***

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AIDS is caused by a virus that scientists call human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV. A virus is a small germ that can cause disease.

If HIV enters your body, you may become infected with HIV. From the time a person is infected, he or she can infect others, even if no symptoms are present. A test using blood, fluids from inside the mouth, or urine can be done to find the antibodies that would mean someone had HIV infection.

HIV can be in a person's body for years without producing any symptoms, and the person can look and feel healthy during those years. Most of the people infected with HIV know that they are infected because they have been tested for HIV antibodies. Even if no symptoms are present, anyone infected with HIV should be under a doctor's care.

People infected with HIV can develop many health problems. These can include extreme weight loss, severe pneumonia, certain forms of cancer, and damage to the nervous system. These illnesses signal the onset of AIDS. In some people these illnesses may develop within a year or two. Others may stay healthy for up to 12 or more years before symptoms appear. Getting medical treatment as soon as possible after HIV infection and getting regular care from a doctor can delay the development of AIDS and help an infected person live longer. Today, new medications used in combination have been proven effective in delaying the onset of illness and are helping people with HIV live longer.

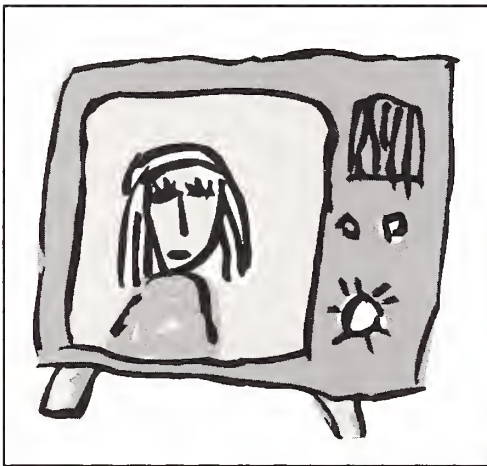


### ***Get tested if you have engaged in these behaviors:***

- having unprotected sexual intercourse — vaginal, anal, or oral – with anyone
- sharing needles or syringes with anyone
- receiving a blood transfusion before 1985

### ***What Is the Difference Between HIV and AIDS?***

HIV infection and AIDS are serious health problems. AIDS is the result of a long process that begins when someone is infected with HIV. A person will not develop AIDS unless he or she has been infected with HIV. By preventing HIV infection, we can prevent future cases of AIDS.



### ***How Does Someone Become Infected With HIV?***

People can become infected with HIV:

- by having unprotected (without a condom) sex (anal, vaginal, or oral) with someone with HIV
- by sharing needles or syringes with someone with HIV
- from a mother with HIV who passes HIV to her baby before or during birth or through breastfeeding
- from a transfusion of blood or blood clotting factors before 1985

### ***How Do People Get HIV Through Sex?***

HIV can be spread through unprotected sexual intercourse from male to female, female to male, male to male, or female to female. Unprotected sexual intercourse means sexual intercourse without correct and consistent use of a latex condom or any other physical barrier to HIV (such as the female condom).

HIV may be in an infected person's blood, semen, or vaginal secretions. It can enter the body through certain types of tissues, especially the tissues that line the inside of the vagina, anus, and penis. It also can enter through cuts or rips (some of which may already be present, and some of which may occur during intercourse) in the vagina, penis, rectum, or mouth. HIV is transmitted by anal, vaginal, or oral sexual intercourse with a person who is infected with HIV.

If someone has an STD, such as syphilis or gonorrhea, he or she is at risk of becoming infected with HIV. There are two reasons for this. One is that the person is involved in the same behaviors that spread HIV. The other reason is that some STDs cause sores on the body — usually on the already vulnerable soft tissues of the penis, vagina, and rectum. The presence of these sores can make it easier for the virus to enter the body. For girls, the presence of one STD changes the chemistry of the receptor cells on the walls of the vagina, making them more receptive to other STDs, including HIV.

If someone is infected with HIV and has another STD as well, he or she is at increased risk of transmitting HIV through sex.

Since many infected people have no symptoms, it's hard to be sure who is or is not infected with HIV. The more sex partners someone has without using condoms, the greater his or her chances are of encountering one who is infected, and of becoming infected. Anybody can have HIV: anyone of either sex and of any race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. And no matter how healthy or attractive a person is, he or she could still be infected with HIV.



### ***How Do You Get HIV From Sharing Needles?***

Sharing needles with another person — even once — is a very easy way to become infected with HIV. Whether you inject drugs or steroids, you risk becoming infected with HIV if you share needles or syringes. Blood from an infected person can stay in a needle or syringe and then be transmitted to the next person who uses it.

### ***Important Questions***

How can you tell if the person you are dating or would like to date has been infected with HIV? The simple answer is, you can't. But as long as you avoid having unprotected sexual intercourse and sharing needles, it doesn't matter.

If you are thinking about becoming sexually involved with someone, here are some important questions to consider:

- Has this person had any sexually transmitted diseases?
- How many people has he or she had sex with?
- Has he or she experimented with drugs?
- Has this person been tested for HIV antibodies?

These are sensitive questions. But they are important, and you have a responsibility to ask. If your potential partner does not know the answers to any or all the questions, think seriously about getting HIV tests for both you and your partner. Additionally, each person can be tested in order to be certain of current HIV status.

You should think of it this way: If you know someone well enough to have sex, the two of you should be able to talk about HIV infection and AIDS. If you are placed in a situation where you or your partner is too uncomfortable, too uninformed, or simply unable to talk about safe sex, then you should not have sex with that person. Open communication is one of the first steps to making sex safer.



## *How Can I Avoid HIV Infection?*

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### *Don't Do Drugs of Any Kind*

Sharing drug equipment — especially needles — with another person to inject drugs can infect you. And many drugs, especially alcohol, can affect your judgment and cause you to do things that place you at risk for HIV infection.

### *Delay Sexual Intercourse*

Don't have sex. Not having sex is the only sure protection against acquiring HIV through sexual contact. Wait to have sex until you are in a long-term, mutually faithful relationship with an uninfected partner. By choosing not to have sex, you:

- Help guarantee your safety from all sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection.
- Give yourself more time to be sure you are physically and emotionally ready to engage in a sexual relationship.
- Give yourself more time to learn and understand more about the physical and emotional aspects of sexual relationships.
- Prevent unintended pregnancy.

### *When You Decide You Are Ready to Have Sex, It's Safer If You Do So With Only One Uninfected Partner in a Mutually Faithful, Long-Term Relationship*

If you have sex, use a latex condom each and every time you have sex (anal, vaginal, or oral). Be certain to read the directions located on the package to ensure that you are using the condom consistently and correctly. Remember that female condoms are also available.

Do not make decisions about sex while you are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. These substances can affect your judgment and cause you to do things that put you at risk for HIV infection.

## *How Else Can I Help Stop AIDS?*

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If you've read this far, you know the facts about HIV infection and AIDS. You'd be surprised at how many people don't know them. A lot of people believe all sorts of myths about AIDS — myths that can be very harmful.

These myths can cause people to unknowingly put themselves, and others, at risk of infection. They can also cause people to treat others unfairly. For instance, some people incorrectly think that AIDS only affects certain groups of people. Because they fear AIDS, they do cruel things to people in those groups. It's not what kind of person you are, it's what you do that can spread HIV.

We can work together to make sure that such prejudice and unfair treatment don't happen. Now that you know the facts about HIV infection and AIDS, you can tell others the truth and speak out against myths and prejudice. The reality behind these myths is that HIV does not discriminate: it can infect anyone.



What's more, people infected with HIV and those with AIDS can use your help. If you know someone who has AIDS, you can give compassion, friendship, or other help without fear of infection from contact that doesn't involve blood, semen, or vaginal secretions.

Even if you don't know anyone who is infected, you can join your community's effort to stop AIDS. You can volunteer your time with a local health organization, youth group, or religious group that has an HIV and AIDS program. Or you can contribute just by telling your friends about HIV. Who knows? You just may save someone's life.



## Do You Know The Facts About HIV Infection And AIDS?

1. HIV can be spread through which of the following?
  - A. insect bites
  - B. everyday contact
  - C. sharing drug needles
  - D. sexual intercourse
2. You can tell by looking whether a person is infected with HIV.  
TRUE  
FALSE
3. From the time a person is infected with HIV, he or she can infect others through sex or sharing drug-injection equipment.  
TRUE  
FALSE
4. Helping people infected with HIV or people with AIDS with their daily tasks does not put you at risk of infection.  
TRUE  
FALSE
5. Babies can be infected by their mothers during pregnancy, birth, or breastfeeding.  
TRUE  
FALSE
6. If you have sexual intercourse only with members of the opposite sex, you cannot be infected with HIV.  
TRUE  
FALSE
7. If they are used consistently and correctly every time you have sex, latex condoms can prevent the spread of HIV.  
TRUE  
FALSE
8. The more sex partners you have without using condoms, the greater your chances of becoming infected with HIV.  
TRUE  
FALSE
9. If you think you've been exposed to HIV, you should seek HIV counseling and be tested.  
TRUE  
FALSE

Answers to Quiz  
1. C and D 2. False 3. True 4. True 5. True 6. False 7. True 8. True 9. True

# Where to Go for Further Information and Assistance



## ***National Resources***

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) National AIDS Hotline, 1-800-342-AIDS (2437), offers 24-hour service seven days a week to respond to any questions that you or a young person may have about HIV infection and AIDS. All calls are free, and you need not give your name. The service is available in Spanish (1-800-344-SIDA (7432) and for the hearing impaired (1-800-243-7889).

Hotline information specialists can refer you to groups in your area that work on HIV and AIDS issues. Also, they can direct you to local HIV counseling and testing centers and send you educational materials.

For additional copies of this guide and other publications on AIDS and HIV infection, you can call the CDC National Prevention Information Network (1-800-458-5231) or write to the CDC National Prevention Information Network at P.O. Box 6003, Rockville, MD 20849-6003.

For information on the Internet, you can access the web site of CDC's National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention ([www.cdc.gov/nchstp/od/nchstp.html](http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/od/nchstp.html)). From there you can access web sites for CDC's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention ([www.cdc.gov/nchstp/hiv\\_aids/dhap.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/hiv_aids/dhap.htm)) as well as CDC's National Prevention Information Network ([www.cdc.gov/nchstp/hiv\\_aids/dhap.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/hiv_aids/dhap.htm)).

## ***State and Local Health Departments***

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If you have questions about AIDS prevention efforts in your community, the CDC National AIDS Hotline can tell you how to reach your state or local health department. Also, you can find the number listed under "Health Department" in the local or state government section of your telephone book.

## ***Community Organizations***

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Thousands of local organizations, such as the PTA, March of Dimes, National Urban League, National Council of La Raza, Boys' Clubs and Girls' Clubs, and United Way of America are working hard to stop the spread of HIV infection. To find out about such organizations in your community, look for them by name in the telephone book or call your local health department.

You can also contact your local American Red Cross chapter. The toll-free number is 1-800-375-2040.

## ***Schools***

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Talk to your local school board, superintendent, principal, teachers, or guidance counselors to find out about the HIV and AIDS education programs that your local school offers and how you can help to make them work. Make sure they

know that you support teaching about preventing HIV infection and AIDS as part of comprehensive health education in school.

### ***The Health Care Team***

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If you have concerns about your health or the health of your child, share them with a doctor, nurse, or other healthcare provider.

### ***Additional Resources for Parent-Child Communication***

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The following resources have expertise in parent-child communication about sexuality, including related issues such as HIV risk behaviors. These resources are included in this brochure for general information rather than endorsement by CDC.

Kaiser Family Foundation  
2400 Sand Hill Road  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
Phone: (650) 854-9400  
Web site: [www.kff.org/homepage](http://www.kff.org/homepage)

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy  
2100 M Street NW  
Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20037  
Phone: (202) 261-5655  
Web site: [www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org)

*What Every Teenager Really Wants to Know about Sex* (book)  
by Sylvia Hacker, Ph.D.  
Carroll & Graph Publishers (1993)  
19 West 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 601  
New York, NY 10010  
Phone (212) 627-8590

*Raising Healthy Kids: Families Talk about Sexual Health* (video)  
Media Works  
P.O. Box 15597 Kenmore Station  
Boston, MA 02215  
Phone: (978) 282-9970  
Web site: [www.abouthhealth.com](http://www.abouthhealth.com)

In addition, you may want to contact the National Prevention Information Network (NPIN) and request a custom database search on this topic.









